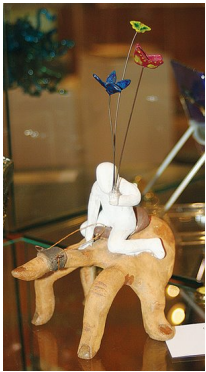


Mature Beyond Their Years: The Quad City Arts High School Invitational, Through May 19

Written by Michelle Garrison
Wednesday, 27 April 2011 05:01

- [Buy Autodesk NavisWorks Review 2009 \(en\)](#)
- [Buy OEM Acala DVD Copy](#)
- [Buy Solidworks 2012 Premium \(64-bit\) \(en,cs,fr,de,it,ja,ko,pl,pt,ru,es,tr\)](#)
- [Buy Cheap MathWorks PTC MathCAD 14](#)
- [Download iPhone App Development: The Missing Manual](#)
- [99.95\\$ Adobe Creative Suite 3 Design Premium cheap oem](#)
- [79.95\\$ Adobe Flash Catalyst CS5 MAC cheap oem](#)
- [Discount - IMSI TurboCAD Pro 15](#)
- [Buy Cheap Adobe InCopy CS6 MAC](#)
- [Buy OEM Dreamweaver CS5 All-in-One For Dummies](#)
- [Buy OEM CorelDRAW Technical Suite X6 \(32-bit\)](#)



The 34th-annual Quad City Arts High School Invitational features 197 artworks, and that's a lot. But the technical ability on display is exciting, particularly if one imagines the work these high-school students might create as they mature.

As a middle-school art teacher, I'm familiar with the long process of artistic development. During high school, students who put in the practice can draw with line realistically and understand composition and visual elements. Getting students to the point where they can draw an accurate still life, or mix the correct paint hues for a portrait, however, is a milestone in itself. And young people who can not only achieve technical fluency but begin to apply a consistent visual style, and express ideas and tone, are generally in the extreme minority. Although all students in this show should take pride in their exceptional work, only about a quarter of the students have reached this even higher level.

This exhibit, running through May 19 at the Quad City Arts gallery at 1715 Second Avenue Rock

Mature Beyond Their Years: The Quad City Arts High School Invitational, Through May 19

Written by Michelle Garrison
Wednesday, 27 April 2011 05:01

Island, presents work from high-school students selected by their teachers, who are invited to display their work as well. Fourteen schools – from Rock Island, Henry, Scott, and Muscatine counties – participated. Besides providing the opportunity to display and sell in a professional venue, the exhibition hands out more than \$2,000 in awards and scholarships, donated by community stakeholders.

Three-dimensional work represents the largest portion of media present, with 52 student works, including sculpture, ceramics, and jewelry. With this age of artist, sculpture projects tend to produce the most imaginative work. When freed from the worry of being realistic – and working with new, and therefore exciting, media – students often approach sculpture in a more adventurous way. About three quarters of the sculptural works present capture this expressive quality.

A sculpture that inspires contemplation is Bettendorf junior Corrin Roswell's whimsical untitled ceramic figure. Its size of about 10 inches tall gives it an initially subtle impact, emphasized by the airy composition created through voids and negative space. But the surreal content demands further inspection: a hand, posed like a walking animal, with a harness around the middle finger "neck." Holding the reins is a smooth, featureless, pure-white figure on a saddle poised on the back of the hand. In that figure's other hand is a bouquet of color butterflies attached to strings, as one would expect to see balloons. The disembodied hand and the captive butterflies add a vaguely dark element. The use of matte glaze creates an earthy, unassuming feel, and Roswell's use of post-fire materials (the string of the reins and the wire for the butterfly strings) makes this strange scene seem more plausible.



A ceramic work made with strong technique is *Stick Teapot*, by Moline High School senior Anthony Ceurvorst. This tea set appears to have been wheel-thrown, then carefully pushed inward to form four even, symmetrical indentations on each piece. The finish is a simple white glaze with subtle gloss. What makes this more than an ordinary teapot is Ceurvorst's sculpting of sticks for the handles and spout, and an acorn for the pull on the pot's lid. The surface treatment of varying browns adds to the illusion, suggesting real branches.

Written by Michelle Garrison
Wednesday, 27 April 2011 05:01

Stick Teapot

is an appealing blend of precise technique with a touch of style.

Drawing is the next most represented media, with 30 works. A large majority of this component of the show demonstrates strong realistic technique through portraits and still lives but lacks a mature development of style. This seems to be reflective of art-course scheduling in schools; drawing classes are usually populated by underclassmen, while older students prevail in the painting, sculpture, and computer-art classes. Drawing classes also seem to focus on learning realistic technique – a necessary skill, but it's difficult for fledgling artists to incorporate ideas and concepts into their lifelike images.



The students applying drawing materials to mixed-media pieces, however, demonstrate both technical and expressive skill. An example of a promising visual style is *Self in Space* by Travis Tomlinson, a senior from Moline. About eight by 12 inches, this image gives the viewer a lot to see. To the right of the composition is a frowning man, face slightly turned. He is wearing a futuristic space suit, with inscrutable words, symbols, and lines appearing on the face shield of the helmet, and the man's face itself. These symbols draw us in to inspect the man, and separate him from the complex background, as we puzzle over their meaning. The composition seems to have captured a brief, still moment in time, emphasizing the narrative quality of the image. The blend of watery and thick acrylics, with marker to accentuate the linear elements, recalls digitally painted concept art for a movie or game. Tomlinson shows us a snippet of an implied story, leaving the viewer to decipher the rest.

Mature Beyond Their Years: The Quad City Arts High School Invitational, Through May 19

Written by Michelle Garrison
Wednesday, 27 April 2011 05:01



michelle_m_garrison@hotmail.com